

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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OMB-01 TRSE-00 /139 W
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R 160750Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 887
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMCONSUL MEDAN
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 11191

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ID, VM, PBOR, ASEAN
SUBJECT: VISIT OF VIENTAMESE PRIME MINISTER TO INDONESIA AND
INDONESIA/VIETNAM CONTINENTAL SHELF NEGOTIATIONS

REF: JAKARTA 10667

1. FOREIGN DEPARTMENT ASIA AND PACIFIC DIRECTOR, ADMIRAL
SUDHARSONO, TOLD EMBOFFS AUGUST 15 THAT THE VIETNAMESE PRIME
MINISTER PHAM VAN DONG'S VISIT TO INDONESIA IS NOW SCHED-
ULED FOR SEPTEMBER 20. PHAM VAN DONG WILL ALSO BE VISITING
ALL THE OTHER ASEAN COUNTRIES EXCEPT SINGAPORE, ALTHOUGH
SUDARSONO DID NOT KNOW IN WHICH ORDER.

2. INDONESIAN FONDEPT OFFICIALS HAVE CHARACTERIZED TO EMB-
OFFS THAT THE JUST COMPLETED NEGOTIATIONS IN JAKARTA FOR
RESOLUTION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY IN THE SOUTH
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CHINA SEA DID NOT YIELD CONCRETE RESULTS BUT AT LEAST SHOWED "BETTER
UNDERSTANDING" BY THE VIETNAMESE (PRESUMABLY OF THE INDONESIAN
POSITION). THE VIETNAMESE STILL WANT TO BARTER, USING
THEIR IDEA THAT THE BOUNDARY SHOULD BE A LINE THROUGH A
SEA VALLEY SEPARATING TWO CONTINENTAL SHELVES. THE INDO-
NESIANS ARE INSISTING THAT THE BASE LINE FORMULA BE EM-
PLOYED, A FORMULA THEY HAVE USED SUCCESSFULLY IN BOUNDARY

NEGOTIATIONS WITH OTHER NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES (AND WHICH MIGHT, THEY ARGUE, BE CALLED INTO QUESTION IF INDONESIA USED ANOTHER FORMULA WITH VIETNAM). THE INDONESIANS SEEM DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN THEIR POSITION. INDEED, THEY SCOFF AT THE VIETNAMESE NOTION OF A SEA VALLEY WHICH THE INDONESIANS SAY IS NOT AT ALL IN ACCORD WITH THE ACTUAL UNDERWATER GEOGRAPHY OF THE AREA AND IS MERELY A PRETEXT FOR VIETNAM'S NEGOTIATING A BOUNDARY FAVORABLE TO THEIR OIL EXPLORATION INTERESTS.

3. SUDARSONO SAID THAT HE COULD NOT PREDICT WITH ACCURACY IF THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED BEFORE PHAM VN DONG'S VISIT. ANOTHER FONDEPT SOURCE INDICATED THAT ANOTHER DATE AND VENUE HAD NOT EVEN BEEN SET. (NOTE: INDONESIA IN THE PAST HAS LINKED THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH VIETNAM WITH ACCEPTABLE PROGRESS ON BOUNDARY TALKS.)

4. SUDARSONO SAW THE PHAM VAN DONG VISIT AS IN THE BILATERAL CONTEXT AND NOT ONE THAT WAS PERCEIVED BY THE INDONESIANS TO INVOLVE CONSIDERATION OF ANY PARTICIPATION OF VIETNAM IN ASEAN. HE THOUGHT, IN FACT, THAT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND TO COORDINATE POSITIONS SO THAT VIETNAM COULD NOT DRIVE A WEDGE IN ASEAN. AT THE SAME TIME, HE SPOKE OF HIS FOREGIN MINISTRY'S VIEWING VIETNAM'S SEEMINGLY CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARD

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ASEAN AS AUTHENTIC AND NOT AT THE INSTIGATION OF THE USSR. IN THEIR ANALYSIS, HE SAID, THEY SAW VIETNAM AS TRULY FRIGHTENED BY FINDING ITSELF SURROUNDED BY HOSTILE COUNTRIES, CHINA AND CAMBODIA; THEIR SENSE OF ISOLATION HAD BEEN HEIGHTENED, ACCORDING TO WHAT THE INDONESIANS UNDERSTOOD FROM THE VIETNAMESE (PROBABLY THE BOUNDARY NEGOTIATION TEAM), BY THEIR SURPRISE AT CHINA'S WITHDRAWAL OF AID. HE THOUGHT VIETNAM'S JOINING COMECON WAS OUT OF NECESSITY, SINCE VIETNAM NEEDED DESPARATELY TO HAVE SOVIET ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, BUT THAT THERE WAS A GOOD PROSPECT OVER THE LONG RUN THAT VIETNAM WOULD ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE AND BECOME AN ASIAN YUGOSLAVIA.
GARDNER

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